[Chicago] November 21, 1962

Dear Scholem:

I am very grateful to you for having sent me your book on the mystical shape of the deity. I was again filled with admiration for your thought, although the subject matter is somewhat more remote from the field of my immediate interest than that of your last book. I am simply in the position of someone who has to learn, i. e. I have almost nothing to say about the details of your book. I was particularly interested in what you say on pages 154 and 169, i. e. about the inadequacy of the neo-Platonic One and the emanation to what the cabalists wish to say. Yet is something like this »undialectical« doctrine not necessary in order to secure the *basis* of the theosophy, as a kind of demonstration of the existence of God? Did not Abulafia say somewhere that the mystics start where the philosophers leave off, which would seem to imply that they cannot start if the philosophers have not laid the foundation? – Your argument on page 204, top, is not quite convincing to me; cf. *Philosophie und Gesetz*, page 78. Is the explanation of Rambam's uneasiness

not his awareness of the innovation? Does not all pseudepigraphy also presuppose such an awareness? – The contradiction (if it is a contradiction) regarding punishment in the other life and through migration of the souls occurs already at the beginning: the myth at the end of Plato's *Republic*. – As for the rehabilitation of Cain (page 223), it might be worthwhile to consult Narboni on *Guide* II 30 (Goldenthal 41 b). – I would be very grateful to you if you would let me know whether there is a cabalistic teaching regarding the noble lie.

Repeating the expression of my thanks, I remain

Yours very cordially,

Leo Strauss.

Greetings from both of us to both of you.